

Dance of the Dead

By William Shakespeare, arranged by Michael Anderson

Additional text by Jon Taie

Scene 1

*Horatio and Hamlet lean against each other back to back, the zombie Ghost shuffles
in toward them behind the audience*

Character enters bearing sign - 'On The Battlements' crosses to up stage left.

Sign Bearer

On the battlements. (*exit*)

Horatio

Peace, break thee off; look, where it comes again!

Hamlet

Looks it not like the king? mark it, Horatio

Horatio

In the gross and scope of my opinion,
This bodes some strange eruption to our state.

Hamlet

I'll speak to it, though hell itself should gape
Angels and ministers of grace defend us!
What may this mean,
That you, dead corpse, again revisits
The glimpses of the moon
Making the night hideous

Horatio

Be wary then; best safety lies in fear.

SCENE 2

CORPSE KING LYING DOWN, WEARING CROWN. ZOMBIE CLAUDIUS BENDS OVER CORPSE, TAKES CROWN AND PUTS IT ON, ZOMBIE GERTRUDE JOINS HIM AS THEY PULL OFF TURKEY DRUMSTICKS AS IF JOINTS OF HUMAN BODY, EATING THEM

Character enters bearing sign - 'An Audience With The King' crosses to up stage left.
Zombie paws at Sign Bearer from offstage.

Sign Bearer

An audience with the king. (*exit*)

Hamlet

The funeral baked meats
Did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables.

Horatio

Not where he eats, but where he is eaten.
your fat king and your lean beggar is but variable service, two dishes, but to one table

ZOMBIE CLAUDIUS

(chewing drumstick, mouth full)

Fie! 'tis a fault to heaven,
A fault against the dead, a fault to nature,
To reason most absurd: whose common theme
Is death of fathers, and who still hath cried,
From the first corpse till he that died to-day,
'This must be so.'

HAMLET

O, that this too too solid flesh would melt
Thaw and resolve itself into a dew!

SCENE 3

HAMLET AND GRAVEDIGGER WITH YORICK'S CORPSE

Character enters bearing sign - 'At The Graveyard' crosses to up stage left.
Zombie(s) grab Sign Bearer and pull offstage.

Sign Bearer

At the graveyard. (exit)

Hamlet

How long will a man lie i' the earth ere he rot?

Gravedigger

I' faith, if he be not rotten before he die--as we
have many pocky corpses now-a-days,--he will last you some eight year or nine year. This same
skull, sir, was Yorick's skull, the king's jester.

Hamlet

Alas, poor Yorick!

(Yorick begins to reanimate)

I knew him, Horatio: a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy: he hath borne me on his
back a thousand times *(Yorick reaches up to grab Hamlet)*; and now, how abhorred in my
imagination it is! *(pushing Zombie Yoricks hands and teeth away)* and my gorge rims at it.

Here hung those lips that I have kissed I know not how oft. Where be your gibes now? your
gambols? your songs? your flashes of merriment, that were wont to set the table on a roar? Not
one now, to mock your own grinning?

SCENE 4

GERTRUDE SITTING, HAMLET KNEELING NEXT TO HER.

Character enters bearing sign - 'An Audience With The Queen' crosses to up stage left. Sign Bearer now Zombie Sign Bearer.

Zombie Sign Bearer

An Audience With The Queen. (*EXIT*)

HAMLET

This was your husband. Ha! have you eyes?
Eyes without feeling, feeling without sight,
Ears without hands or eyes, smelling sans all

Zombie Gertrude

O Hamlet, speak no more:
Thou turn'st mine eyes into my very soul;
And there I see such black and grained spots

Hamlet

Mother, for love of grace,
It will but skin and film the ulcerous place,
Whilst rank corruption, mining all within;
Infects unseen.

Zombie Gertrude

This the very coinage of your brain:
I have no life to breathe
What thou hast said to me.

HAMLET

O shame! where is thy blush? Rebellious hell,
How thou canst mutiny in a matron's bones!

SCENE 5

Character enters bearing sign which is unintelligible crosses to up stage left. Sign Bearer now Zombie Sign Bearer.

Zombie Sign Bearer

(VARIOUS GROANS/MOANS) (EXIT)

HAMLET

Tis now the very witching time of night,
When churchyards yawn and hell itself breathes out
Contagion to this world: now could I drink hot blood,
And do such bitter business as the day
Would quake to look on.

(ZOMBIE POLONIOUS ATTACKS FROM LEFT)

You cannot, sir, take from me any thing that I will
more willingly part withal: except my life, except
my life, except my life

*(hitting Zombie Polonious, who grabs stick away .
Zombie Claudius attacks from right, Zombie Rosencrantz
from left as soon as Hamlet displays numchucks)*

To be, or not to be: that is the question:

HITTING ZOMBIES C. AND R.

Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,

ZOMBIE R. GRABS NUMCHUCKS

Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,

pulls out pistol

And by opposing end them? To die: to sleep;

Zombies L. and G. come

No more; and by a sleep to say we end
The heart-ache and the thousand natural shocks

shoots Zombie L. twice

That flesh is heir to, 'tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wish'd. To die, to sleep;

To sleep: perchance to dream: ay, there's the rub;

For in that sleep of death what dreams may come

The fair Ophelia! Nymph, in thy orisons

Be all my sins remember'd.

shoot Zombie Gertrude twice

Unloads revolver

Zombie Ophelia comes

Hamlet surrenders to Ophelia

ALL ZOMBIES DEVOUR HAMLET

Notes

All Zombies: You are slow-moving, vacant-eyed, George Romero zombies. You shuffle with arms outstretched, moaning lowly. You want to eat brains.

Zombies Claudius (sc. 2) and Gertrude (sc. 4) can speak, but slow, slurred.

Scene 1: Zombie Ghost is not trying to attack Hamlet and Horatio (unlike the other zombies) He is just the walking undead.

Scene 2: Zombie Claudius speaks with his mouth full of human (ie turkey) flesh off the bone. He is giving the inner monologue of a ravenous zombie.

Scene 3: Zombie Yorick stands moaning between Hamlet and Gravedigger. He reanimates on he hath borne me on his back a thousand times, and slowly tries to grab and bite Hamlet, but not successfully. Hamlet pushes him away.

Scene 4: Zombie Gertrude is only halfway through zombification. She is slowly fading into a zombie state. Her killer line is This the very coinage of your braaaain delivered distracted, moaning, the zombie overcoming the human.

Scene 5: Zombies- four waves 1) Polonius, 2) Claudius/Rosencrantz, 3) 3) Gertrude/Laertes, 4) Ophelia and others. Your cue to come out is when previous zombie(s) goes down. When you take a hit (club, numchucks, Nerf dart): first hit– stunned; second hit- fall to knees, third- crawling but NEVER completely out. You are always slowly getting back up. First out– Zombie Polonius from left. He goes down and grabs club away on except my life. Then pairs: Claudius (right) and Rosencrantz (left), hit with numchucks until R. grabs away on outrageous fortune, then Laertes (left) and Gertrude (right), hit with Nerf darts. Ophelia comes out on For in that sleep of death what dreams may come. All zombies are closing in by in thy orisonsBe all my sins remember'd. They all converge to devour him, end of play, take applause!